

Bedford Housing Partnership Meeting  
October 22, 2015 – 7:30pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room, Town Hall

**Members present:** Jean Hammond, Ellis Kriesberg, Kate Moskos, Lisa Mustapich, Jane Puffer, Kris Washington, Christina Wilgren

**Absent:** Irma Carter, Alice Sun

**Town Manager:** Rick Reed. **RHSO:** Liz Rust and Lara Plaskon

**Guests:** Dorothy Bergin for the Bedford Citizen, Don Cullis for Land Acquisition Committee

Moskos called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of Sept 15 with minor correction, unanimous.

### **Rental Assistance Program**

Lara introduced the rental assistance grant program, modeled after similar programs in Waltham and other neighboring towns. Attachments discussed include: advertising flyer, FAQ, introductory letter that will be sent to property managers of affordable units, application for grant, application checklist, inspection checklist, program contract for landlord/tenant. The program would provide a grant for those seeking a legally affordable unit. The grant would be for unit or utility security deposit or first month's rent. The grant program would be administered by the Muni housing trust. It will be funded by HOME funds and be HOME compliant. The Bedford Housing Authority will do inspections of eligible units for \$25 per inspection. There will be a Bedford affiliation preference, and the unit must be in Bedford. The group discussed where the program will be advertised, library, COA, schools, houses of worship, property managers of affordable units, library, youth and family services. The committee discussed income limits for the grant recipients, and agreed that applicants must have adequate income to sustain the rent after receiving the grant. The Trust will discuss the program at the next meeting. The Partnership voted unanimously to recommend to the Trust to approve and institute the program.

### **Land Acquisition for Affordable Units**

Don Cullis came to the meeting to inquire discuss potential criteria for meeting the needs of affordable housing. The committee has a list of desired properties, it has been mostly for open space. The committee discussed the desire to do another Habitat for Humanity type project, and that a past grant was used to purchase the land for the existing Habitat project. Email Don with ideas for land acquisition ideas that could be used for affordable housing.

### **Updates on Development Projects and Programs**

- **VA Housing** - under construction and slated for completion in April.
- **Coast Guard Property** – no updates
- **South Road** – hearings before the Planning Board continue. Developer to include 1 affordable unit and \$100K grant to Muni Trust. Also, partnering with the VA for an accessible unit.
- **Loomis St** – 2 affordable units set to close.
- **Small Grant Program** – applications are being accepted.

- **Life Management program** – 12 families are participating, 8 are adult learners, one found employment at the VA after coaching through the program, 2 families are learning personal financial management.

### **Zoning Bylaw Amendment, Conversion of Public School properties.**

This petitioner's article has previously been discussed as "Page Place". The property owners asked to build additional market rate units and garages for all the existing units as a way to raise capital. The property owners did not include an affordable component. Mustapich asked the group to separate the Page Place location from the Zoning Bylaw Amendment, and to discuss the big picture zoning amendment that's on the warrant. She informed the group that the Planning Board unanimously voted to recommend the voters disapprove this amendment at Town Meeting. The reasons the PB recommend disapproval varied. Mustapich felt the number and size of the units in the proposed bylaw could have made room for including an affordable component. Excluding affordable units sets a poor precedent for future use of the bylaw as well as future bylaws. Another planning board member felt that the large units would not meet the price point for working/middle class buyers, which she believes should be around \$400-\$600K. Other planning board members declined support for a mix of the reasons stated by the other two. The Partnership discussed the need for setting parameters for accommodation in lieu of an affordable unit. The \$100K proposed by South Road may have been an arbitrary number that was not well analyzed. The committee also discussed the precedent that the bylaw could set. Moskos moved, Wilgren seconded that the Committee recommend at Town Meeting to disapprove the Zoning Amendment. The reasons were that it does not include an affordable component, and while we are at our 10% required by 40b, we should always strive to maintain our number of affordable units, which can be eroded by the addition of new non-affordable units. It sets a precedent for future use of the bylaw and future bylaws. Passed unanimously.

Next meeting will be December 3 @ 730 PM.

Recorded by Lisa Mustapich

Minutes approved on December 3, 2015.